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The document is intended as (1) as informative device for college faculty and administrative officers who plan to conduct or are conducting associate degree programs in nursing, (2) a guide for the faculty in self-evaluation and program improvement, and (3) an evaluation tool for the Board of Review for Associate Degree Programs in the accreditation process. Criteria are presented in connection with each of the following topics: philosophy and purposes, organization and administration, faculty, students, resources and facilities, curriculum development and program of instruction, and evaluation. (JK)

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NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR NURSING

DEPARTMENT OF ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

1967

Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Nursing Leading to an Associate Degree

Revised Edition

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

College faculty refers to the total faculty of the institution.

Curriculum refers to course content, instruction, and sequential arrangement of courses leading to the associate degree in nursing.

Director denotes the faculty member who heads the unit in nursing.

Nursing laboratory includes the hospital(s), other community agencies, and/or the laboratory areas within the college plant that are designated for students' planned learning activities.

Program includes the curriculum and all of the activities that take place under the direction of the college needed to fulfill the purposes of associate degree nursing education.

Purposes, aims, objectives, and **goals** are used synonymously.

Technical Nurse: A registered nurse with an associate degree licensed for the practice of nursing who carries out nursing and other therapeutic measures with a high degree of skill, using principles from an ever-expanding body of science. The technical nurse performs nursing functions with patients who are under the supervision of a physician and/or professional nurse and assists in planning the day-to-day care of patients, evaluating the patient's physical and emotional reactions to therapy, taking measures to alleviate distress, using treatment modalities with knowledge and precision, and supervising other workers in the technical aspects of care.

Unit in nursing and **nursing unit** are used synonymously to designate an administrative entity within the college.

PHILOSOPHY OF ACCREDITATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

Sound associate degree nursing education is a part of higher education in the United States and is established on generally accepted standards of junior-community college education. Associate degree nursing education provides both liberal and technical education for the individual who will contribute to meeting the nursing services needed by society.

NLN, because of the composition of its membership, has opportunity to view the health needs of society and thus determine the nursing needs. Within this framework, the responsibility for the standards of nursing education programs is vested in the peer professional membership, which is in keeping with the pattern of voluntary accreditation. Since the associate degree program in nursing is an integral part of the college, we believe it is appropriate that accreditation of the nursing program be carried out in cooperation with regional accrediting associations wherever feasible.

Educational institutions are committed to, interested in, and responsible for, self-evaluation. The process of self-evaluation is a major factor toward helping the program to review its past, analyze the present, and move toward progress. Accreditation, then, refers to the process of self-evaluation in qualitative terms against current standards.

Accreditation of an associate degree program in nursing reflects a program that is flexible and progressive, meeting the changing needs of the society it serves through sound educational methods and a humanistic approach.

HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRITERIA

The development of the criteria presented in this document began as a five-year study on the part of junior and community college administrators and nursing instructors, those members of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs of the National League for Nursing who were involved in the latter type of program, and various other persons who were particularly concerned with evaluation of associate degree programs in nursing.

The Steering Committee of the Division of Nursing Education of the National League for Nursing appointed a subcommittee in January, 1954, to formulate more definite criteria for the evaluation of educational programs in nursing. This subcommittee, entitled the Committee to Develop More Definite Criteria for the Evaluation of Educational Programs in Nursing, had representation from the Department of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs and from the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs. At the subcommittee's first meeting in March, 1954, the members agreed that their first problem was to differentiate the criteria used in the evaluation of programs leading to a bachelor of science in nursing degree from those used in the evaluation of programs leading to a diploma or an associate degree.

The first report of the subcommittee was considered by the Steering Committee of the Division of Nursing Education in January, 1955. At this time, it was decided that the subcommittee members concerned with diploma and associate degree programs and the members concerned with baccalaureate and higher degree programs should meet separately and develop criteria in their respective areas.

The Subcommittee for Associate Degree Programs met in 1960-61 to prepare draft criteria, and early in 1962, the tentative statements of criteria were submitted to all of the 66 colleges then conducting associate degree programs in nursing.

Upon study of their responses and further analysis of the criteria, the subcommittee prepared the final draft of the statements at its March, 1962 meeting. On May 13, the Steering Committee of the Department of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs approved the criteria for use by the colleges offering associate degree programs in nursing and by the Board of Review for Associate Degree Programs in its evaluation of the educational programs for accreditation.

At the National League for Nursing Convention held in San Francisco in 1965, the membership voted to establish a separate department to meet the needs of associate degree nursing programs. After this action, the Steering Committee of the Department of Associate Degree Programs appointed a

committee to review the criteria and the policies and procedures of accreditation. The committee began its work in December of 1965.

The criteria were revised and distributed to all associate degree programs for review, and comments relative to the revisions were submitted. The committee completed the revised draft of the criteria, using the comments obtained from those in associate degree nursing education, and the steering committee approved the revisions in October, 1966, for presentation to the department's Council of Member Agencies for its consideration. The council approved the revisions at its next meeting, which took place in San Francisco on March 3, 4, and 5, 1967.

The following statements reflect the opinions and beliefs of many groups comprising hundreds of educators whose thinking represents a cross-section of viewpoints on associate degree programs in nursing.

USES OF THE CRITERIA

This document is intended to serve as (1) an informative device for use by the college faculty and the administrative officers who plan to conduct or are conducting associate degree programs in nursing; (2) a guide for the faculty to use in self-evaluation and program improvement; (3) an evaluation tool for the Board of Review for Associate Degree Programs to use in the accreditation process.

Criteria are significant indices, or standards of measurement, to be used in appraising the quality and the characteristics of an educational program. They should be formulated and accepted by the educators concerned with the type of program to which the criteria pertain. The present criteria were formulated by colleagues who are involved in associate degree programs in nursing.

These statements reflect acceptable standards. They are guides to action and yardsticks against which achievement can be measured.

In the final analysis, however, criteria are necessarily evolutionary and so, need to be reviewed and revised periodically in order to keep them abreast of changes in nursing and education.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSES

The philosophy and the purposes of the associate degree program in nursing are clearly stated, periodically reviewed, and accepted by the faculty in nursing and approved by the college faculty according to college procedure. They are consistent with the philosophy and the purposes of the college and are expressive of the basic educational principles accepted by the college faculty.

I. The statements of philosophy and purposes of the associate degree program in nursing are used in developing and conducting the curriculum and in evaluating educational results.

II. The philosophy and the purposes are consistent with the accepted principles for the development and the conduct of associate degree programs in nursing, which include:

   A. Preparation of graduates who are competent to perform as beginning nurse practitioners.

   B. Completion of general education requirements appropriate to associate degree education within the particular institution.

   C. Provision of opportunities to participate in the college social and cultural activities conducive to the development of the potentialities of the student as a person and as an interested, contributing member of society.

   D. Provision made for control and implementation of courses in nursing by the faculty in nursing within the framework of the college policy.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The organization, the administration, and the policies of the unit in nursing are in accord with the general policies that govern the organization and the administration of other units in the college that offer programs of comparable type and academic level.

I. The organization and the administration of the unit in nursing are comparable to those of other units within the college with respect to:

   A. Relationships with the administrative authorities.

   B. Relationships with other units.

   C. Privileges, responsibilities, and policies.

   D. Representation on central councils, committees, and other agencies of the faculty.

   E. Publicity and recruitment.

   F. Long-term planning.

II. The college administration provides for the resources and the facilities needed by the unit in nursing to achieve its purpose.

   A. Financial support to implement the objectives of the unit in nursing is assured, with provision for the budget and its operation made in accordance with college policy.

   B. There are contracts or agreements covering the use of any part of the facilities of another agency or institution.

      1. Such contracts or agreements are initiated by the college, are in written form, and are periodically reviewed by the parties thereto.

      2. Such contracts or agreements ensure that the faculty members have control of the students and freedom to teach and guide them and to select the patients assigned for nursing laboratory experiences in consultation with appropriate members of the agency staff but unhampered by obligations to provide nursing service.

III. The organization of the unit in nursing is consistent with the general policies of the college.

   A. The members of the faculty are employed by and responsible to the college.

B. The functions, the responsibilities, and the authority of each member are clearly defined in the terms of appointment.

C. The academic status of each faculty member is appropriate to her functions and qualifications.

IV. The director of the unit in nursing has authority and responsibility compatible with the general policies of the college in regard to:

A. Participation in the preparation of the budget of the unit in nursing and in the administration of the budget upon its approval.

B. The screening and the recommendation of candidates for faculty appointment, retention, and promotion.

C. Direction of and participation in the instructional program.

D. Fulfillment of the nursing unit's share of responsibility for:

1. Carrying out the policies and maintaining the standards of the college.

2. Developing and maintaining satisfactory relationships with:

a. The central administration.

b. Other units in the college.

c. Other agencies or institutions that provide facilities.

d. Community groups.

e. Appropriate state, regional, and national agencies.

E. Organization and administration of the unit in nursing in such a way that:

1. The administrative and the functional relationships among faculty members are clearly defined.

2. The work of the nursing unit is equitably and appropriately distributed among the members of the faculty.

3. Regularly scheduled conferences concerned with the improvement of the program are planned and conducted.

4. Reports and minutes of faculty action are recorded, filed systematically, and kept available for reference.

FACULTY

The faculty members of the unit in nursing are sufficient in number and in their qualifications for effective performance of their functions; the composition and the organization of the group are conducive to such functioning; and the policies in effect for the members are consistent with the policies pertaining to the college faculty.

I. The faculty in nursing develops, implements, and evaluates the nursing curriculum in accordance with the stated purposes.

II. The faculty in nursing is responsible for:

   A. The educational resources and the instruction in nursing.

   B. The organization, the development, and the sequences of the courses in the nursing curriculum.

   C. Participation in the activities of the total faculty of the college in ways that benefit the college, the unit in nursing, and the faculty members themselves.

   D. Personal and professional development as individuals and as faculty members.

III. The faculty in nursing shares in the responsibility for:

   A. The development of standards for the selection and the graduation of students in the nursing program.

   B. The counseling and the evaluation of students.

IV. The qualifications of each nurse faculty member are appropriate to her academic status and to her functions.

   A. The director of the unit is a professional nurse who has:

      1. Educational preparation that includes at least completion of a program leading to a masters degree with:

         a. Content in educational administration.

         b. Study in a major nursing area.

      2. Credentials verifying her legal status as a registered nurse in the state in which the program is located.

      3. Such other credentials as may be required by the college.

      4. Professional background that enables her to function effectively in the areas of administration, teaching, and nursing practice as well as the area of public relations.

B. Each faculty member is a professional nurse who has:

1. Educational preparation that includes completion of a program leading to a masters degree in teaching in an area of nursing or has started graduate study toward that degree with a plan to complete the required preparation.
2. Credentials verifying her legal status as a registered nurse in the state in which the program is located.
3. Such other credentials as may be required by the college.
4. Professional experience that enables her to function as a practitioner of nursing and as a teacher of nursing.

V. The composition of the faculty of the unit in nursing is such that through the degrees of its individual members, educational preparation in a variety of institutions is represented.

VI. The policies in effect for the nurse faculty members are those in effect for other faculty in the college.

VII. Part-time faculty members, guest lecturers, and any others who contribute to the education of students in the courses in nursing on a part-time basis are utilized in accordance with college policy.

STUDENTS

The policies in effect for students in the unit in nursing are the same as those in effect for all students enrolled in the college, with such applications and adaptations as are normally made in view of the difference in the types of education in the various units. The academic standards for the students reflect the requirements and the purposes of both the college as a whole and the unit in nursing.

RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

Resources and facilities that are needed for effective development of the nursing program are provided for by the college.

I. The library resources are adequate in scope and extent for effective use in teaching and in study by faculty members and students.

   A. The adequacy of the library resources is directly related to the achievement of the curriculum purposes.

   B. The nurse faculty members participate in the selection of additions to the library.

II. The physical resources of the unit in nursing facilitate the achievement of the program's purposes.

III. The college arranges for a variety of facilities to be used in the teaching of nursing in hospitals and other health and community agencies that are approved by the appropriate authorities.

IV. The faculty in nursing determines, selects, and evaluates the facilities suitable for the purposes of the program.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

The curriculum reflects the philosophy and the objectives of the program in nursing. It is developed and revised by the faculty in nursing in accordance with college policy.

I. The nursing program is developed to fulfill the stated objectives, the college requirements for the associate degree, and the state requirements for eligibility to write the State Board Test Pool Examination.

   A. The objectives of each nursing course reflect the purposes of the program and are periodically reviewed by the faculty in nursing.

   B. The curriculum includes the areas in nursing, natural sciences, social sciences, and the humanities.

   C. The clinical experiences are teaching-learning experiences with specific objectives.

II. The nursing curriculum demonstrates the generally accepted pattern for associate degree education and is consistent with the college policy.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is a planned, ongoing activity of the college and the unit in nursing and is directed toward the improvement of the program.

I. Evaluation methods and instruments are developed and used by the faculty in nursing for the purpose of measuring student achievement and performance.

II. The teacher's effectiveness as a faculty member is assessed in accordance with college policy.

III. There is planned, systematic follow-up of students and graduates.